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INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 8777
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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0117
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 7338
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 4383
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0360
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4718
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6120
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 7002
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 1766
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S E C R E T LA PAZ 000178

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/02/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [BL](#) [VE](#)
SUBJECT: LATEST PODEMOS MAGIC BULLET: NAVA TO TURN ON EVO

REF: A. LA PAZ 94
[1](#)B. 08 LA PAZ 2567
[1](#)C. 08 LA PAZ 1720
[1](#)D. 08 LA PAZ 1411
[1](#)E. 07 LA PAZ 3078

Classified By: A/EcoPol Chief Brian Quigley for reasons 1.4 (b)(d)

[1](#)1. (S) Opposition strategist Javier Flores (strictly protect) told PolOff February 1 that Bolivian Army Lt. Jorge Nava is working with Flores and opposition Senator Roger Pinto (Podemos, Pando) to discredit the government's denial of involvement in the June 21 bombing of an opposition television station in Tarija Department (state). Nava was caught fleeing the scene and is under investigation for his role in the bombing, but has not yet cooperated with either Bolivian prosecutors or a separate Senate investigation (reftel d). Flores said Nava's father and attorney originally approached him late in January complaining that Minister of the Presidency Juan Ramon Quintana has not followed through on promises to provide Nava with money, protection, and passage to either Cuba or Venezuela (Note: Other contacts had told us the government planned to assign Nava to the Bolivian attache' office in Caracas. End Note.) Flores said Nava's disgruntled father claimed he had a long argument with Quintana about the government "using" his son as a pawn without proper respect for the "hell he is going through."

[1](#)2. (S) Flores claimed Nava showed him a "library" of recordings he had collected from cell phone conversations with Venezuelan Mission personnel, Presidential Palace staff up to and including Quintana, Defense Minister Walker San Miguel, and President Evo Morales. Flores claimed the Morales recording he heard only "implied knowledge" of Nava's attack. He opined the recordings would be a "hard blow" against the government when released within the next two to three weeks. (Comment: We are more skeptical. The generally muted public reaction to proof that the Venezuelan Embassy had rented the vehicle Nava used in an act of domestic terrorism provides a precedent: outrage from the opposition and shoulder shrugs from MAS sympathizers. End Comment.)

[1](#)3. (S) Flores also claimed Nava had recordings linking the

government to the November 2007 deaths of three opposition protesters in Sucre (reftel e), which also involved Nava. Flores claimed he and Pinto had come to an "understanding" with Nava to "help him get out of the country" before the recordings would be released by the Senate investigation of the bombing. Although Flores said a number of countries were being considered for Nava, Flores suggested that Peru or Colombia were the easiest options.

Other Magic Bullet Developments

14. (S) Flores said a conversation between Pando City Councilman Miguel "Chiquitin" Becerra and alleged would-be Pinto assassin Blusher Alpire, proving a relationship between the two (which Becerra denies), would also be released shortly (ref a). Although they had originally planned to release it in January, they wanted to make sure Alpire was "safe" before releasing new information in the case. (Note: PolOff heard the Becerra/Alpire recording and it does seem to establish a familiar relationship. End Note.)

Comment

15. (S) A public Nava turn against the government would be front-page news and elicit increased scrutiny of an already unpopular Venezuelan Mission (reftel c). However, we doubt the evidence Nava has would directly link Morales to knowing complicity in the crime. If all Nava has to offer is more proof of Venezuelan involvement, or even some new proof of Quintana's involvement, we doubt the confession will have a significant impact on domestic politics. The linking of Quintana in contraband, September violence and subterfuge in Pando, and a murder plot against Pinto have seemed to bounce off of Teflon Juan (reftels a and b) and we do not expect a different result if Nava links Quintana directly to the Tarija bombing, especially since many already assume this is the case. Flores and his mostly-Podemos group keep looking for a magic bullet confessional to use against the government, but the government's core supporters do not seem to believe in or care much about such charges. End Comment.

URS